

SFD Dispatch Policy and Guideline Manual

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Effective: August 6, 2008

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Reference: *Essentials Of Fire Service Customer Service*, Alan V. Brunacini

The following are priorities of fire service customer service. These priorities were developed by the Phoenix Fire Department and have been proven to be effective.

Priority # 1 - Our essential mission and number one priority is to deliver the best possible service to our customers.

Remember that when people need our services, they are normally having one of the worst days in their life.

Priority # 2 - Always be nice – treat everyone with respect, kindness, patience, and consideration.

This human to human process begins with the initial call to request assistance. Our customers would like to connect with a dispatcher that is nice, calm and professional.

Priority # 3 - Always attempt to execute a standard problem-solving outcome that is quick, effective, skillful, safe, caring and managed.

The service that we provide is typically deployed using a combination of human, hardware and software components that provide the capability to dispatch the proper apparatus to the incident.

Our goal is to create a “WOW” reaction in the person(s) who is receiving the service, watching or hearing the service being delivered. “WOW” is the natural, involuntary, intense human reaction when receiving a service that is delivered in a way that is significantly, surprisingly and positively beyond normal expectations.

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Chief Brunacini says “WOW” service produces outcomes like:

- Secures and maintains adequate resources and benefits
- Happy customers, bosses, voters and workers
- Brings out the best in us – provides positive job satisfaction
- Places us in the best position to compete
- Completes our basic customer promise
- It’s fun to be good and to do good
- Doing it right the first time eliminates bad press, liability, lawyers, lots of meetings, and extra paperwork
- It saves lives
- It’s the right thing to do

A major operational objective for our business is to dispatch units and have those units arrive in time to interrupt the customer’s problem while it’s still in progress and interruptible. Maintaining this intervention, dispatch and response time capability is the entry price we must pay to get into the emergency services game. If our service isn’t quick, it isn’t emergency service. A standard 911 customer expectation is that everyone and every part of the system will behave like the problem is an urgent event from the time we know about it until it’s over. Speed and effectiveness form a critical partnership for us and the customer.

Priority # 4 – Regard everyone as a customer.

A progressive change in our mentality and approach involves regarding everyone we encounter, both directly and indirectly, as a person who is our customer. The citizens that we service are considered customers. Your co-workers and other inter-city agencies are considered customers.

As stated above, an important group we must consider our customers are the other agencies we routinely deal with when we deliver service. These agencies include: police, public works, gas utility providers, hospital staff, nurses, etc. Sometimes we extend services to them and sometimes we are their customer when we ask for assistance from them.

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Priority # 5 – Consider how you and what you are doing looks to others.

We must consider how we look and sound to the customers – as individuals and as an organization. This impression is created and maintained by the direct and indirect impression and feeling the customers develop in response to the appearance, performance and behavior of our members.

The dispatcher in control of that customer impression becomes our department image maker. This quickly shows that our dispatchers are directly in control of the customer service delivery experience.

The general objective of the positive image plan is to create the consistent customer observation and opinion that we are professional, under control, functionally focused, serious, effective and friendly.

Priority # 6 – Basic organization behavior must become customer-centered.

Customer-centered means that our customer needs, perceptions and feelings begin to design and drive how the service delivery system looks and behaves.

Priority # 7 – We must continually improve our customer service performance.

By continuing to evaluate the needs of our customers, we can make changes and improvements to our customer service program. This process must be ongoing to accurately reflect a positive experience for the customer.

For additional information regarding customer service and emergency medical dispatching, see Emergency Medical Dispatch, Policy Section # 4.